



## **News Release**

**For Immediate Release**  
Tuesday, June 27, 2006  
**Media Contact:**  
Lynn Meinor  
HIV Prevention Program  
(801) 538-6096

### **Free HIV Testing Available Throughout Utah**

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – Through June 30, free and confidential HIV testing will be available at various locations throughout Utah for those at risk of getting HIV/AIDS. To mark the 25<sup>th</sup> year of AIDS and to demonstrate the ease of being tested, Utah Department of Health executive director Dr. David N. Sundwall today took an oral HIV test using one of the latest testing technologies, which produces results in about 20 minutes.

“Improvements in technology have brought HIV testing and treatment light years ahead of where we were in 1981,” Sundwall said. “However, despite these improvements in technology and numerous educational campaigns, many at-risk Utahns have never received an HIV test. Additional education about the ease of testing and treatment is needed to help reverse this trend.”

As part of National HIV Testing Day, the UDOH held a demonstration of the OraQuick® Rapid HIV Test and discussed how the detection, treatment and public perception of HIV/AIDS has evolved in Utah and in the United States. For example:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 180,000 to 280,000 people nationwide are HIV-positive but are unaware of their status.
- Minority Americans now represent both the majority of new HIV cases and of Americans living with HIV/AIDS in the United States.
- In Utah, a total of 3,025 HIV/AIDS cases have been reported through 2005; 100 cases were reported in 2005 compared to 101 cases in 2004.
- During 2005, 7,796 individuals were test at publicly funded sites. Of those, 5,815 were tested using the OraQuick® Rapid HIV Test.

Free testing times and dates vary by location. In most locations, rapid testing with same-day results will be available. While the test is running, individuals will receive information about

**- MORE -**

## **Page 2 of 2 – Free HIV Testing Available Throughout Utah**

HIV/AIDS, discuss prevention methods and design a risk management plan. A complete list of times, dates and locations is available at [www.aidsinfoutah.org](http://www.aidsinfoutah.org) or by calling the UDOH at (801) 538-6096.

“HIV testing and counseling enables people with HIV to take steps to protect their own health and that of their partners, and helps people who test negative get the information they need to stay uninfected,” said Lynn Meinor, HIV Prevention Program manager, UDOH.

The goal of National HIV Testing Day and the corresponding free HIV testing is to encourage at-risk Utahns to get tested. The National Association of People with AIDS created the National HIV Testing Day campaign in 1995 in response to the increasing number of new infections among different segments of the populations, and in response to the growing apathy of persons knowing their HIV status. This June marks the 25<sup>th</sup> year since AIDS was officially classified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For more information about HIV and AIDS, please visit [www.aidsinfoutah.org](http://www.aidsinfoutah.org) or [www.health.utah.gov/cdc](http://www.health.utah.gov/cdc).

# # #

*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.*